

IN THE SPECIFICATION

At page 14, line 7 to page 15 line 10 of the published PCT application, please amend as follows:

The present invention will be described in more detail below with reference to the examples illustrated in the drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 diagrammatically shows an assembly according to the invention, in a state in which it is suitable for being taken to the intended position in the body;

Fig. 2 is a similar view to that of Fig. 1, except that the assembly is now in a position in which the ring with the anchoring elements is in the anchoring position and is released by the applicator;

Fig. 3 shows a diagrammatic view of a protective sleeve for the applicator from Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 shows a diagrammatic view of the central section of the applicator from Figs. 1, 2;

Fig. 5 shows a diagrammatic view of one of the grippers of the applicator from Figs. 1 and 2;

Fig. 6a shows a specific embodiment of the distal end of the protective sleeve, shown in particular in Fig. 3;

Fig. 6b shows a distal end of the protective sleeve from Fig. 6a with a loading tube inserted into it;

Figs. 7a and 7b show a loading device for loading a ring with anchoring elements onto an applicator, with Fig. 7a showing the loading device in the initial position and Fig. 7b showing the loading device in an intermediate position;

Fig. 8 shows the operation of an alternative loading device in a highly diagrammatic manner;

Fig. 9 shows an illustrative example of a section of a ring with anchoring elements in perspective view in which, by way of explanation, the anchoring elements are

shown in the anchoring position on the left-hand side and in the fitting position on the right-hand side.

Fig. 10 shows, by way of example and with the entire applicator omitted, a ring with anchoring elements from the assembly according to the invention, with Fig. 10a showing the anchoring elements in the fitting position and Fig. 10b showing the anchoring elements in the anchoring position, namely at the location of the annulus of a heart valve;

Fig. 11 shows a sectional view of a further embodiment of a sleeve or gripper which can be used with the assembly according to the invention in a position in which it carries the ring (Fig. 11a) and a position in which it releases the ring (Fig. 11b);

Figs. 12a and 12b show a variant of Fig. 11a and Fig. 11b, respectively;
and

Fig. 13 diagrammatically shows an example of an influencing system working with an electrostatic field, with Fig. 13a showing a diagrammatic plan view of a loop for generating an electrostatic field and Fig. 13b showing a diagrammatic sectional view of a section of blood vessel tissue with an artificial heart valve to be fitted;

Fig. 14 shows a diagrammatic perspective view of a variant of the device from Figs. 11 and 12, but in this case used in a fastening device for an end-to-side anastomosis;

Fig 15 shows in sectional view an embodiment of the second invention of this application; and

Fig 16 shows diagrammatically another embodiment of the second invention of this application; and

Fig 17 shows in sectional view another embodiment of the second invention of this application.

At page 29, line 28 to page 30, line 22 of the published application, please amend as follows:

With reference to figure 12 and the additional pins 120 of figure 15 (described further below), it is to be noted that the anchoring of the ring 72 to the annulus can be improved by providing the fixed flange 76 at its underside with anchoring pins. Those anchoring pins extend in the insertion position axially in order to facilitate easy penetration of the annulus, this is called the first penetration position. The anchoring is improved when, after piercing the pin 120 - like shown on the left side of figure 15 - straight and axially into the annulus, this pin is bend in an arbitrary direction to a second penetrated position. By providing such a bend the pin will less easily come loose from the annulus. Although figure 15 shows, at the right side, the pin 120 bend in radially inward direction, this bending direction can for just anchoring also be different, for example in radially outward direction or in tangential direction or a direction in between. The stronger the bend of the pin, the stronger the anchoring effect. With reference to figure 12, one could provide pins 120 directly adjacent the small side of a ~~slit~~ slot 79. By bending the pin then from a tangentially curved direction - in which it extends in front of the ~~slit~~ slot - to an axially straight direction and inserting the fingers 77 through the ~~slits~~ slots 79, the fingers keep the pins 120 in the first position ready for penetration into the annulus. Withdrawing the fingers will then firstly allow the lower flange 73 to bend outwards - when the temperature exceeds the threshold - and secondly allow the pins to return to the tangentially curved direction to extend in front of the ~~slits~~ slots 79 again. The pins can return to this position by using memory shape effects as discussed earlier or just by using normal spring bias effects coming free when a mechanical constraint (the fingers) is removed. It will be clear that the pins can also be arranged adjacent the longer sides of the ~~slits~~ slots when it is desired to allow the to bend in radially inward or outward direction. Further, it will be clear that this additional anchoring effect can also be used with applicants earlier inventions as described in WO-00/24339, WO-00/44311, WO-03/003926 and WO-03/082121, without the first invention (~~claims 1-30~~) or the second invention (~~claims 31-34~~) of this application being applied.

At page 33, lines 10 - 24 of the published application, please amend as follows:

Figure 15 shows the second invention in a first embodiment. Figure 15 is essentially based on figure 12. The sleeve 74 with fingers 77 and valve leaves 75 are not shown. Further same reference numbers as in figure 12 are used. It is shown that the pins 120 lie adjacent the outer, longer side of the ~~slots~~ slots 79. The pins are in straight position (figure 15a), called the first penetrated position, prebiased towards the bend position, called the second penetrated position, as shown on the right of figure 15 in figure 15b. Although here the fingers 77 of the sleeve are mentioned as mechanical constraints, it is to be noted that those fingers 77 and the corresponding slots 79 can be left away, when one uses the memory shape effect of suitable metals or plastics to keep the pins in straight position and allow them to return to the bend position after increasing the temperature above a certain threshold. As the pins move radial inward -- according to figure 15 by bending -- only after they have been fully pierced into the annulus, this movement is fully utilized to press the annulus correspondingly in radial inward direction, the annulus is so to say constricted (although its diameter might be unchanged because the ring 72 actually prevents the annulus from restriction).

At page 34, lines 5 - 8 of the published application, please insert the following:

It is also conceivable -- see figure 17 - to arrange for a separate constriction ring 121, which is to lie around the ring member 72 of a valve prosthesis, preferably in between the lower 73 and upper 76 flanges as invented earlier by applicant, see WO-00/24339, WO-00/44311, WO-03/003926 and WO-03/082121